

Office Distribution Only

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release TO THE AM's OF
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1944.

The traditional oyster season opens Friday but fanciers of the bivalve will find few on the market, and those they find will probably be small, according to Charles E. Jackson, Acting Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior.

The marketable supply of oysters in New England and New York waters this year, Mr. Jackson said, is considerably smaller than in preceding years. Because of high prices prevailing last year, a number of oystermen sold all they had. In other cases even under-sized oysters were opened and sold.

In the Chesapeake Bay area it is hoped that production this year will be about the same as last season. A production of some two million bushels is expected from Maryland waters.

Although the oyster season begins, according to tradition, on September 1 and many restaurants and hotels make special efforts to provide their customers with the mollusk on that day, oysters do not usually begin to arrive on the market in any quantity until October. Oyster consumption then accelerates, reaching its peak during the Christmas holidays.

While oyster production has its seasons, there is no longer a good reason for eating oysters only in those months whose names include the letter "R". Methods of quick freezing have now been perfected and choice oysters, taken in the cold months when they are at their peak of plumpness and flavor could be enjoyed in any month of the year. The quick freezing of winter-taken oysters began shortly before the present war and today few oysters are so frozen. After the war, however, Americans may look forward to having substantial quantities of such oysters the year round.